

1. What did Richard III look like?

Richard was dark-haired, thin-faced, strong and a good soldier. After he died stories spread that he was a deformed hunchback.

‘Richard was little of stature, deformed of body, one shoulder being higher than the other.’

Written by Polydore Vergil, an Italian historian writing for Henry VII.

Richard was ‘crook-backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right.’

Written by Thomas More, writing 30 years after Richard died.

However no records from his lifetime say Richard was a ‘crookback’.

4. Why were some people loyal to him when others rebelled against him?

As soon as Richard became king a good many people rebelled against him. They were angry that he had taken the crown from his nephew.

However he also won a lot of loyalty from others, especially in the north of England where he lived before he became king. After Richard died, the leaders of the city of York wrote that he had been

‘piteously killed and murdered, to the great heaviness [sorrow] of this city.’

2. Why did Richard take the crown from his nephew, Edward V?

After Richard died, his enemies said he took the crown because he wanted the power and wealth of being king.

However Richard said he became king because his nephews were illegitimate and so could not inherit the crown. He said that a bishop had told him that the boys' father (Edward IV) and mother had never been legally married because their father had already made a marriage agreement with another woman. No-one knows definitely if this story is true.

Other reasons why Richard became king might be

- a) he feared a civil war would break out if there was a boy king.
- b) he feared that other nobles would take his lands and wealth away from him, supported by the new young king.

We do not know for certain why Richard took the crown from Edward V.

5. How did he die?

Richard died at the battle of Bosworth in August 1485. He died bravely, leading a cavalry charge directly against Henry Tudor, the leader of the enemy army. Even his opponents said Richard 'was killed fighting manfully in the thickest press of his enemies.'

But we do not know any more details of his death.

How exactly did he die?

3. Did Richard murder his nephews, the Princes in the Tower?

Edward V and his brother were in the royal palace in the Tower of London when Richard took the crown in July 1483. There is no record of them being seen alive after that summer. Soon afterwards there were rumours that they'd been murdered and some people believed Richard had killed them. After Richard died, histories of his reign said he'd had the boys murdered in the Tower. However there is no definite evidence he did so.

It has been suggested that the Duke of Buckingham (Richard's closest supporter) killed the Princes but again there is no definite evidence for this.

Another possible murderer is Henry VII but that means the boys must have survived the two years of Richard's reign and then been killed when Henry became king and had married their sister.

Note that these cards are in an odd numerical sequence, simply because it was the most economic use of space